

#### IV. REMARKS

1. Claims 15 and 18 are amended. Claims 1-18 are allowed.

2. The drawings are amended to overcome the objections. Replacement sheets are being submitted concurrently with this response.

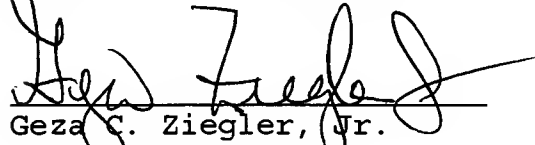
3. The specification is amended to overcome the objections. It is noted however that the page numbers referred to in the Office Action regarding the objections to the specification appear to be incorrect. For example, "page 5, line 3" as recited in the Office Action with respect to the language "loop end cross-link" appears to be "page 4, line 3" of the specification as originally filed.

4. Claims 15 and 18 are amended to overcome the objections.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record, and are in proper form for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment for any fees associated with this communication or credit any over payment to Deposit Account No. 16-1350.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Geza C. Ziegler, Jr.  
Reg. No. 44,004

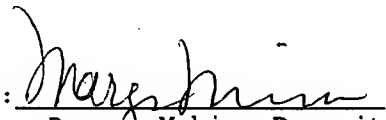
11 AUGUST 2005  
Date

Perman & Green, LLP  
425 Post Road  
Fairfield, CT 06824  
(203) 259-1800  
Customer No.: 2512

#### CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service on the date indicated below as first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner of Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Date: 8/12/2005

Signature:   
Person Making Deposit